

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 8147

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: LEADERSHIP TIDBITS AND RUMORS

REF: (A) LENINGRAD 780, (B) MOSCOW 8041.

1. THE FOLLOWING TIDBITS REGARDING THE TOP LEADERSHIP HAVE RECENTLY COME TO OUR ATTENTION:

--GROMYKO REPORTEDLY TOLD THEN FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN, DURING THE FORMER'S VISIT TO THE UK, THAT ROMANOV WOULD NOT BE CHANGING JOBS AND WOULD REMAIN IN LENINGRAD "FOR THE TIME BEING". (IN THIS LIGHT, THE APPOINTMENT OF LENINGRAD MAYOR KAZAKOV AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE RSFSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MAY SAY MORE ABOUT KAZAKOV'S ABILITIES THAN ABOUT ROMANOV'S IMMEDIATE POLITICAL FUTURE);

--ZIMYANIN WAS GIVEN AN UNUSUAL FOUR AND ONE-HALF MINUTES ON TELEVISION EVENING NEWS MAY 17, AS HE ADDRESSED A RALLY OF YOUTH LEADERS; HE WAS ALSO IDENTIFIED MAY 16 AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SOVIET COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD CONGRESS OF PEACELOVING FORCES. THESE FUNCTIONS, TOGETHER WITH HIS APPARENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PRESS AFFAIRS, INDICATE HIS PORTFOLIO AS CC SECRETARY IS MORE VARIED THAN WAS THAT OF DEMICHEV. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT, JUDGING FROM PRESS ACCOUNTS, HE HAS BEEN EXTRAORDINARILY ACTIVE SINCE HIS

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ELEVATION TO THE CC SECRETARIAT AT THE 25TH CONGRESS. THE

EXTENT OF ZIMYANIN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CULTURAL FIELD REMAINS UNCLEAR;

--KOSYGIN AND KULAKOV HAVE NOT BEEN HEARD FROM SINCE THE FIRST WEEK IN MAY AND PRESUMABLY ARE VACATIONING;

--BREZHNEV DID NOT TRAVEL TO DNEPROPETROVSK MAY 21, AS EARLIER RUMORED (MOSCOW 8041). OUR SOURCE FOR THE RUMOR WAS A WELL-INFORMED EASTERN EUROPEAN JOURNALIST, WHO ACCURATELY PREDICTED THE BREZHNEV BUST UNVEILING, SO THERE MAY BE SIGNIFICANCE IN BREZHNEV'S NON-APPEARANCE AT DNEPROPETROVSK.

2. WE PASS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LEADERSHIP RUMORS FOR WHAT THEY ARE WORTH:

--WHEN BREZHNEV APPEARED AT THE ZIL FACTORY APRIL 30, TWO FANCY AMBULANCES WERE IN THE MOTORCADE PARKED AT THE FACTORY. BREZHNEV'S PERSONAL DOCTOR WAS WITH HIM AT ALL TIMES, AND CUT OFF BREZHNEV'S WALKING TOUR OF THE PLANT AFTER IT HAD RUN OVER THE SCHEDULE BY 25 MINUTES (15 MINUTES REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN ALLOTTED FOR THE WALK);

--WHEN THE QUESTION OF SCULPTOR ERNST NEIZVESTNIY'S EMIGRATION WAS DISCUSSED AT A POLITBURO MEETING (PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE), ANDROPOV REPORTEDLY SUGGESTED THAT NEIZVESTNIY BE ALLOWED TO RETAIN A SOVIET PASSPORT (AS A NOMINAL EMIGRANT TO ISRAEL, HE WOULD NORMALLY BE REQUIRED TO RENOUNCE SOVIET CITIZENSHIP). SUSLOV REPORTEDLY REACTED TO THIS WITH A LENGTHY, ANTI-SEMITIC DIATRIBE ABOUT NEIZVESTNIY AND "HIS KITH AND KIN". ANDROPOV BACKED OFF AND DID NOT PRESS THE ISSUE TO A VOTE --SO THE STORY GOES;

--THE LATEST VERSION OF THE "BIG CHANGES" SUPPOSEDLY TO COME AT THE NEXT CC PLENUM: PODGORNYY AND PEL'SHE WILL RETIRE; KOSYGIN WILL REPLACE THE FORMER, KIRILENKO (RUMORED TO BE ILL) WILL BE KICKED UPSTAIRS TO REPLACE THE LATTER AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY CONTROL COMMITTEE;

--A YOUNG SOVIET PROFESSIONAL TELLS US THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES BELIEVE IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT BREZHNEV, PODGORNYY AND KOSYGIN WILL RETIRE WITHIN A YEAR, TO BE REPLACED BY KULAKOV, KUNAYEV AND MAZUROV RESPECTIVELY;

--RIVALRY REPORTEDLY EXISTS IN THE PRESS FIELD BETWEEN ZIMYANIN (BACKED BY BREZHNEV) AND TASS DIRECTOR ZAMYATIN (BACKED BY KOSYGIN AND PODGORNYY); PRAVDA COMMENTATOR YURIY ZHUKOV IS A SUSLOV PROTEGE;

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-- SUSLOV, NOT KIRILENKO, SUBSTITUTED FOR BREZHNEV DURING THE LATTER'S ABSENCE FOLLOWING THE 25TH CONGRESS. ACCORDING TO THIS RUMOR, SUSLOV AND KIRILENKO USUALLY SHARE BREZHNEV'S RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN HE IS OUT OF ACTION (THIS FROM A WESTERN JOURNALIST WHO GOT THE STORY FROM A "RELIABLE" SOVIET SOURCE; WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY LIGHT THE DEPARTMENT CAN SHED ON THE CREDIBILITY OF THIS REPORT.)

3. AND TWO RUMORS ABOUT LESSER LIGHTS:

--DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AND KOSYGIN'S SON-IN-LAW) GVISHIANI WILL SOON REPLACE NIKOLAY INOZEMTSEV AS DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF WORLD ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS; INOZENTSEV WILL ASSUME "A HIGHER POLITICAL POSITION";

--USA INSTITUTE DIRECTOR ARBATOV IS WELL-CONNECTED TO THE LEADERSHIP THROUGH AN UNSPECIFIED RELATIVE OF HIS WIFE. STOESSEL

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